

**Angela Dorsey:** My name is Angela Dorsey with NARA's Agency Services Program. We are here today with NARA's new Chief Records Officer, Paul Wester, to discuss the 2011 Records Management Self Assessment Survey. Welcome Paul!

**Paul Wester:** Good morning, Angela.

**Angela:** Paul, can you briefly describe the survey?

**Paul:** Absolutely! Each year with the Records Management Self-Assessment survey what we do is we reach out to all Federal Agencies across the government and ask them to answer a series of questions about how well they are following different NARA regulations and Federal statutes regarding records management. We take the answers that these agencies provide us and do an analysis of those answers and provide a report to Congress, OMB and to the general public. One of the things that we've discovered in doing the survey over the last several years is that there are a number of issues with Federal records management taking place across the government. 95% of Federal agencies are at either a high risk or moderate risk of having challenges within their program that undermine how well they can manage their records.

**Angela:** Should agencies expect to see any differences between this year's survey and last year's survey?

**Paul:** Yes, there will be differences between last year and this year. Last year, our focus was on records management training as well as a series of core questions that we ask each year. This year, we will be asking the same core questions of all agencies, but we'll also have two special area focuses: One, will be on how well agencies audit and otherwise manage their records management program, and the second area of concentration will be how well agencies identify and transfer their permanent records to the National Archives for safe keeping.

**Angela:** And how long to agencies have to respond to the survey?

**Paul:** Well, we launched the survey on Monday, May 2<sup>nd</sup> and agencies have until Friday, June 3<sup>rd</sup> to complete the survey online and transmit all their electronic answers to us to the survey questions. Agencies also have until June 17<sup>th</sup> to go back and work with us on making sure all the answers they provided to us by June 3<sup>rd</sup> were correct and complete and the way that they wanted them answered. And also to provide us documentation that we are asking from them to be able to validate the survey submissions that they provided to us by June 3<sup>rd</sup>.

**Angela:** Paul, what will NARA do with the results after the survey?

**Paul:** Well, each year what we've done with the results is reported the general information about the results in a performance and accountability report. This is a report that we submit each year to Congress and OMB. We've also in the last two years provided a final report of our analysis of the assessment and provided that also to OMB, and to Congress and other

interested stakeholders. We will continue to be doing that sort of reporting out of the results again this year. The other thing that we do with the results from the self assessment is use that information to help guide our future plans for agency inspections depending upon how well agencies respond and in what ways they respond to the survey questions. Also, the feedback that we get from the agencies through the survey also helps us identify different guidance products we need to develop to better support agencies and their records management efforts.

**Angela:** Wonderful! Paul I want to thank you for time. This concludes our interview for today. Are there any final reminders for our audience?

**Paul:** Absolutely! We want to remind all Federal agencies and their records officers that they have until June 3<sup>rd</sup> to complete the survey and be able to provide us answers to the survey questions that we have online. And, we will be providing more information about the self-assessment itself on our blog, *Records Express*, and we encourage folks to take a look at what is on that blog space to be able to better understand what we're doing for self-assessment and a whole host of other records management issues of concern to records officers across the government and other folks interested in records management across our country.

**Angela:** Wonderful! Thank you so much.

**Paul:** Thank you, Angela.